

14 December 2001

CEHR-E (690-500)

MEMORANDUM FOR STAFF PRINCIPALS, HQUSACE AND
COMMANDERS/DIRECTORS, MAJOR SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND FIELD
OPERATING ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Inclusion of GS-808, Architects, and Appropriate Engineering Disciplines
When Classifying and Recruiting for Interdisciplinary Positions

1. Reference:

a. CEHR-E Memorandum, Subject: Classification of Interdisciplinary Positions,
dated 1 Feb 1993.

b. Office of Personnel Management Position Classification Standard, GS-808,
Architecture series, dated October 1986.

2. Headquarters staff recently identified numerous instances of vacant interdisciplinary positions announced for recruitment that inappropriately exclude GS-808 Architects, as well as other disciplines, such as Mechanical Engineer, GS-830 and Electrical Engineer, GS-850 from consideration. When a position is being filled as interdisciplinary, and the GS-810 Civil Engineering series is one of the series listed in the job announcement, the GS-808 and other appropriate series should also be included. Commanders filling interdisciplinary positions in their organization should take the necessary steps to assure job descriptions and vacancy announcements include the GS-808 Architect series, and other appropriate engineering series, unless strong justification exists for excluding them.

3. The reason most often provided for excluding architects is that only "professional engineers" meet contracting warrant requirements. A "registered professional architect" is equivalent to a professional engineer for contract warrant purposes. Warrant requirements include training in contracting, education in business, and experience in contracting. Qualification in any technical field other than contracting is not required. Resident and Area Engineers or other positions requiring a contract warrant can be equally filled with professional engineers or architects who possess the appropriate experience and background.

4. Architecture, civil engineering, and other engineering specialties are disciplines defined and recognized as professions by academic institutions, industry, and

government. Architect positions and certain types of engineering positions may have virtually inseparable duties and inherent knowledge, skills and abilities. The objectives, CEHR-E (690-500)

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functions, activities and subject matter of such positions may be quite similar if not identical. The duties and responsibilities of such positions and the qualifications required for the work are such that persons with training and experience in any of the professions may be considered to be equally well qualified for the work. *Such a position may be designated as interdisciplinary for recruitment purposes when the problems may be approached by applying the principles and methods of architecture or engineering.*

5. It is not sufficient to just include the GS-808 and other engineering series in a list of potential series in a job description or position vacancy announcement. Just as critical is the selection of skills criteria used to screen applicants for positions. Commanders should advise selecting officials and the human resource professionals supporting them to avoid using any skill criteria that penalize qualified applicants. For example, skill criteria for interdisciplinary jobs generally should not include references to engineering. If architects are consistently screened out of the recruitment process, an analysis should be conducted to assure that skill criteria that inappropriately filter them out are eliminated. The same analysis should also be conducted if other interdisciplinary series such as mechanical or electrical engineers are being routinely screened out by skill criteria.

6. Supervisors and mentors should work closely with architects and engineers to assure their individual development plans stress the importance of assignments and training that are outside of the traditional architect or engineering stovepipe. Experience in project management and ability to lead multi-functional teams is as important as technical competencies at the GS-13 and higher-grade levels. Architects, engineers, and indeed all employees, should be provided training on preparing resumes that reflect broader leadership competency. They should also be counseled on the need to exercise personal responsibility in seeking out, and accepting assignments that will better prepare them to meet their personal career goals.

7. I fully appreciate that all commanders and managers recognize the value of each individual professional design discipline to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In this regard, inclusion of the GS-808 Architect series, and other appropriate engineering series, in interdisciplinary job descriptions and position vacancy announcements should be the norm, not the exception.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

/S/
HANS A. VAN WINKLE

Major General, USA
Deputy Commander